

REMARKS

This is in full and timely response the Office Action dated October 19, 2005.
Reexamination in light of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9-10, 12-14, and 16-21 are currently pending in this application,
with claims 1 and 21 being independent. *No new matter has been added.*

Allowable subject matter

Appreciation is expressed for the indication within paragraph 8 that claims 3-4
contain allowable subject matter.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 and 35 U.S.C. §103

Paragraph 4 of the Office Action includes a rejection of claims 1, 2, 5-9 under 35
U.S.C. §102 as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,504,502 to Arita et al. (Arita).

Paragraph 6 of the Office Action includes a rejection of claims 10-13 under 35
U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over Arita.

Paragraph 7 of the Office Action includes a rejection of claims 14-18 under 35
U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over Arita in view of U.S. Patent Application No.
2003/0038780 to Lu.

These rejections are traversed at least for the following reasons.

Claim 1- Claim 1 is drawn to a slide-type multi-directional input key comprising:

a key top which has an upper portion protruding from an insertion hole extending
through an exterior member and a lower portion having a pushing member protruding

downwardly therefrom and which is capable of sliding in the direction of a hole inner surface of the insertion hole; and

a key sheet formed of a rubber-like resilient material, the key sheet being adapted to support the key top so as to allow the key top to slide from the initial position in the direction of the hole inner surface of the insertion hole and in the return direction toward the initial position, the key sheet generating an elastic urging force whereby the key top returns automatically to the initial position,

wherein the key sheet is firmly attached to the key top and the exterior member.

Arita - Arita arguably teaches a pointing control device for moving a cursor on a display on a computer having permanent magnet 18 provided on the slider 10, and magnetically reluctant elements 14, 14' (Arita at Figure 19, column 8, lines 25-33).

The Office Action attempts to identify element 10d of Arita as a key top (Office Action at page 2). The Office Action attempts to identify element 13 of Arita as a key sheet (Office Action at page 3). Arita arguably teaches that when the slider 10 is depressed in the vertical direction, the *resilient* legs 13e of the housing are deformed to depress and close the switch 15, through the small disc section 13b (Arita at column 8, lines 57-60). However, Arita fails to disclose, teach or suggest element 13 as being *rubber-like resilient material*.

In addition, Arita fails to disclose, teach or suggest key sheet 13 as generating an elastic urging force whereby the key top 10d returns automatically to the initial position.

Thus, Arita fails to disclose, teach or suggest a key sheet formed of a rubber-like resilient material, the key sheet being adapted to support the key top so as to allow the key top to slide from the initial position in the direction of the hole inner surface of the insertion hole and in the return direction toward the initial position, the key sheet generating an elastic urging force whereby the key top returns automatically to the initial position.

Arita arguably teaches a rubber piece 37 (Arita at Figure 15D, and column 7, lines 53-57). However, a slider 10 of Fig. 15D is not capable of sliding in the direction of a hole inner surface of the insertion hole.

Arita arguably teaches the presence of magnetically reluctant elements 14 and 14'. However, Arita fails to disclose, teach or suggest a plurality of contact input portions adapted to effect input upon receiving pressure from the pushing member when the key top is caused to slide. In this regard, Arita fails to disclose, teach or suggest the magnetically reluctant elements 14 and 141 as being adapted to receive pressure from the pushing member (permanent magnet 18). The magnetically reluctant elements 14 and 14 are not the contact input portions.

Note also regarding claim 10, the Office Action admits that Arita fails to disclose, teach or suggest that the exterior member is a ring-shaped outer-ring key top allowing multi-directional input. However, the Office Action cites element 11 of Arita for the exterior member of claim 10.

In response to this position taken within the Office Action regarding element 11, claim 10 is dependent upon claim 1. Claim 1 includes a key top which has an upper portion protruding from an insertion hole extending through an exterior member and a lower portion having a pushing member protruding downwardly therefrom and which is capable of sliding in the direction of a hole inner surface of the insertion hole.

However, the elastic member 11 shown within Figure 2 of Arita has no insertion hole. Thus, the elastic member 11 in Arita is not an outer-ring key top found within claim 10.

Thus, all claimed features are not found within Arita.

Lu - Lu arguably teaches a joystick having a thin film 2 having a hole 25 (Lu at Figure 1). Lu arguably teaches a protrusion 35 and pits 36 (Lu at Figure 3).

Nevertheless, Lu fails to provide the features that are deficient from within Arita.

Withdrawal of these rejections and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Newly added claims

Newly added claims 19-20 - Claims 19 and 20 are allowable at least for the reasons provided hereinabove with respect to claim 1, and at least for the additional features found within claims 19 and 20.

Newly added claim 21 - Claim 12 is drawn to a slide-type multi-directional input key comprising:

a key top including an upper portion protruding from an insertion hole extending through an exterior member and a lower portion having a pushing member protruding downwardly therefrom, the upper portion being adapted to slide toward a hole inner surface of the insertion hole;

a plurality of contact input portions adapted to effect input upon receiving pressure from the pushing member, the pushing member being adapted to slide toward at least one of the contact input portions; and

a flexible film having an exposure hole, the pushing member being adapted to come into contact with the hole inner surface of the exposure hole.

Arita - Arita arguably teaches a pointing control device for moving a cursor on a display on a computer having permanent magnet 18 provided on the slider 10, and magnetically reluctant elements 14, 14' (Arita at Figure 19, column 8, lines 25-33).

However, Arita fails to disclose, teach or suggest magnetically reluctant elements 14, 14' as being adapted to effect input upon receiving pressure from the permanent magnet 18 when the slider 10 is caused to slide toward the surface of the circular window 19b. Specifically, Arita fails to disclose, teach or suggest the permanent magnet 18 contacting the magnetically reluctant elements 14, 14' (Arita at Figures 20B and 20C).

Thus, Arita fails to disclose, teach or suggest a plurality of contact input portions adapted to effect input upon receiving pressure from the pushing member.

Moreover, Arita fails to disclose, teach or suggest a flexible film having an exposure hole, the pushing member being adapted to come into contact with the hole inner surface of the exposure hole.

Lu - Lu arguably teaches a joystick having a thin film 2 having a hole 25 (Lu at Figure 1). Lu arguably teaches a protrusion 35 and pits 36 (Lu at Figure 3).

However, Lu fails to disclose, teach or suggest a plurality of contact input portions adapted to effect input upon receiving pressure from the protrusion 35 (Lu at Figure 3). In addition, Lu fails to disclose, teach or suggest the pits 36 being adapted to come into contact with the hole inner surface of the hole 25 (Lu at Figure 3).

Thus, Lu fails to disclose, teach or suggest a pushing member being adapted to come into contact with the hole inner surface of the exposure hole.

Allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, all the claims now pending in the present application are allowable, and the present application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reexamination and reconsideration of the application in light of the amendments and remarks is courteously solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone Brian K. Dutton, Reg. No. 47,255, at 202-955-8753.

If any fee is required or any overpayment made, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fee or credit the overpayment to Deposit Account # 18-0013.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

David T. Nikaido

Registration No.: 22,663

Brian K. Dutton

Registration No.: 47,255

RADER, FISHMAN & GRAUER PLLC

1233 20th Street, N.W.

Suite 501

Washington, DC 20036

(202) 955-3750

Attorneys for Applicant